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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/704,926	11/02/2000	Paul Alexander Torrie	00167-400001	4678

7590

02/07/2003

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EXAMINER

HURLEY, SHAUN R

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3765

DATE MAILED: 02/07/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

678

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/704,926

Applicant(s)

TORRIE ET AL.

Examiner

Shaun R Hurley

Art Unit

3765

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 December 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-26 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 27-30, 33 and 34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 31, 32, 35 and 36 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 02 November 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election **without** traverse of Group II, claims 27-36 in Paper No. 10 is acknowledged.
2. Claims 1-26 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

Drawings

3. This application has been filed with informal drawings which are acceptable for examination purposes only. Formal drawings will be required when the application is allowed.

Specification

4. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

On page 1, lines 2-4, serial number 09/453120 is now abandoned. Applicant should amend the specification to reflect such. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Art Unit: 3765

5. Claims 30, 33, and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hayhurst (5810848).

Hayhurst teaches a device for repairing a tear in tissue (Figures 1-14) comprising a needle (30) defining a slot (Figure 12, detail 70) and having both a proximal region, and a distal region being defined between two holding elements (32, 62), one of which is a ramp (32), a first fixation member positioned within the distal region (Figure 3, detail 44), and a second fixation member positioned within the proximal region (Figure 3, detail 46), wherein a flexible member is coupled to the first and second fixation members (52).

6. Claims 27 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Harper et al (6152934).

Harper teaches a flexible member holder (Figure 17) comprising a shaft (136), a first tine at an end region of the shaft having a first region (164), and a second tine at the end region of the shaft having a second region (166), wherein first and second regions each comprise a groove (located at the curve of the tine).

7. Claims 27-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Christy et al (6152936).

Christy teaches a flexible member holder (Figure 1) comprising a tubular shaft (20), a first tine at an end region of the shaft having a first region (Multiple fingers 122 such as figure 10), and a second tine at the end region of the shaft having a second region (122), wherein first and second regions each comprise a groove (Figures 11A-11C, groove located at pinching end 124).

Art Unit: 3765

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 31, 32, 35, and 36 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion


9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Kogasaka (5797928) teaches what is well known in the suturing art.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shaun R Hurley whose telephone number is (703) 605-1236. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri, 7:00am - 4:00pm, off every other Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John J Calvert can be reached on (703) 305-1025. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9302 for regular communications and (703) 872-9303 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-085.

SRH
February 4, 2003


JOHN J. CALVERT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700